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Via ECFS  
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to  
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

Five years ago, I switched my phone and DSL internet service from AT&T to an alternative local-area provider. The reason: my DSL service had been slow yet AT&T's price had ratcheted steadily upward through the years. Also, my phone service had been quite limited, and better options from AT&T were pricey. The new provider offered us a 4X increase in DSL speeds and bundled 'fusion' phone service that was vastly better, all for a lower monthly price.

When I notified AT&T that I was switching, I was surprised to get a phone call from a rather highly-placed person in our AT&T service area asking why, after 40 years, I was leaving their company. When I described the competitive option above, she admitted they couldn't really compete! So, open competition gave me a superior choice. I also expect that AT&T customers have benefited indirectly as the company has been forced to work harder to retain its existing customers.

Lately, our local internet provider has been installing high-speed fiber and connecting existing DSL customers at no extra cost. The upgrade hasn't quite reached me yet, but now I've been informed that this effort might be jeopardized by USTelecom's forbearance petition before the FCC. As I understand it, if granted this could threaten key connections in the telecom network that make local upgrades like this possible.

Please consider the likely negative effects on consumers of giving big ILEC's too much power over vital parts of the telecom network that are shared by everyone.

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